## YOU ARE THE DOCTOR #3

# THE GRAND BETELGEUSE HOTEL

## BY CHRISTOPHER COOPER

**THE DOCTOR: SYLVESTER McCOY**
Time traveller.

**ACE: SOPHIE ALDRED**
Time traveller's companion.

**RUBEN:** [also **GUARD**]
(M, 30s) Simian ex-hotel porter, nervous disposition.

**KORDEL:**
(F, 40+) Mercenary – cynical, experienced, brawn-over-brain.

**CHAFAL:**
(M, 50s) Prosecuting Judge.

**ALSO: HOSTAGES.**

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(MUSIC: OPENING THEME)

**SCENE 1: INT. COURT OF JUSTICE, SOROR**

FX: A DEEP BELL RESONATES ONCE. ATMOS: ECHOEY CHAMBER.

**CHAFAL:**
I, The Honourable Heelius Chafal, Prosecuting Judge of The High Court of Soror, undertake to give due consideration to the testimony of the accused, in accordance with the Laws of Soror, as enshrined in the Articles of Obedience.
The accused will now confirm they confess to any and all crimes with which they are about to be charged. How do you plead?

**ACE:**
I plead total ignorance. You won't even tell me what I'm supposed to have done.

**CHAFAL:**
Ascertaining "what you have done" is the sole purpose of these proceedings.

**ACE:**
(ANGRY, TIRED) So how do you expect me to plead anything?

FX: SHUFFLING OF PAPERS, CONSTERNATION FROM THE GALLERY

**CHAFAL:**
The court appreciates that, as an illegal alien, you may be unfamiliar with our legal statutes. However, you would be well advised to do what you are told — or accept sentencing *without* trial.

**ACE:**
That's what you call justice?

**CHAFAL:**
Justice is the state's concern. Yours is to abide by the Articles of Obedience. Only after a confession has been entered can we begin. How do you plead?

**ACE:**
We were trying to help.

**CHAFAL:**
(UNDER BREATH) That will have to do. (TO THE COURT) The accused has confessed. Let the prosecution commence.

FX: THE BELL RINGS.

**ACE:**
Hang on, I didn't confess to anything!

**CHAFAL:**
The following charges have been lodged: aiding and abetting an enemy of the state; unlawful entry, and intent to commit Grand Larceny on a state-owned facility; and two counts… of murder.

**ACE:**
(TAKEN ABACK) That's… Now you just hold on a minute!

**CHAFAL:**
(OVER) By entering a confession, the accused has waived all right of appeal. The penalty for such crimes is public execution via Dispersal Chamber.

FX: THE BELL RESONATES AGAIN, A SINGLE ECHOING CLANG.

**ACE:**
This is mad. I haven't killed anyone!

FX: HOLOGRAPHIC EMITTER ENGAGES, HUMMING IN BACKGROUND TO END OF SCENE.

**CHAFAL:**
Question: What do you know of the man pictured here on the holo-emitter?

**ACE:**
(SADLY) Professor… (TO THE COURT) He's my… he <u>was</u> my friend.

**CHAFAL:**
You should take greater care over the company you keep. (BEAT) And where is this "Professor" now?

**ACE:**
(SO QUIET) Gone.

**CHAFAL:**
The court would appreciate it if they could *hear* your testimony.

**ACE:**
(SHOUTS) <u>*Gone!!!*</u> We weren't even supposed to be here. It's my fault we landed up here in the first place…

CUT TO:

**SCENE 2: INT. SERVICE CORRIDOR, HOTEL**

FX: FADE UP BACKGROUND HOWL OF AIR-CON. TARDIS MATERIALISES, DOOR OPENS.

**ACE:**
(EXITING) Bang on target this time, I'm telling y…
(REALISATION) Oh.

**DOCTOR:**
Never mind, Ace. It could be worse.

**ACE:**
Hardly Sydney Harbour, though, is it?

**DOCTOR:**
I'm sure this nondescript, damp-smelling corridor leads somewhere infinitely more intriguing.

FX: SHUTS THE TARDIS DOOR.

**DOCTOR:**
Well, what are you waiting for? (STRIDES OFF)

**ACE:**
(DEJECTED) Coming.

FX: SHE FOLLOWS.

CROSSFADE TO:

**SCENE 3: INT. ANOTHER SERVICE CORRIDOR**

FX: FADE UP. DOCTOR & ACE APPROACHING DOWN CORRIDOR.

**ACE:**
Did you ever have to take a test? I mean, do Time Lords take a TARDIS driving test or something?

**DOCTOR:**
I was never really one for exams. There's no substitute for getting one's hands dirty. Mucking in. What kind of person wants to sit in some stuffy room deliberating multiple choice questions on the hyperspaceway code…?

**ACE:**
You failed it, didn't you?

**DOCTOR:**
"Failure" is a very loaded term, Ace… (COUGHS EVASIVELY) I wonder what's through here?

FX: CONTROL BLEEPS. A DOOR OPENS.

**ACE:**
I spy with my little eye something beginning with… another corridor. Come on, admit it — there's nothing here but dirty laundry. We're lost.

**DOCTOR:**
Nonsense. I'm never lost. Misplaced occasionally, waylaid, but never lost. Not for long. (A THOUGHT) Laundry basket.

**ACE:**
What about it?

**DOCTOR:**
You can learn a lot from a laundry basket.

FX: FLIPS WICKER LID, RUMMAGES THROUGH BASKET.

**ACE:**
Going by the stink, I'm not sure I'd want to.

**DOCTOR:**
Aha! A towel. (SNIFFS LOUDLY) Barely even used. Just a hint of Skarowood Oil. Hmm, see this embroidered monogram? G. B. H. — which means?

**ACE:**
It belongs to a violent criminal with sensitive skin?

**DOCTOR:**
Very good… but no. G. B. H.: Grand Betelgeuse Hotel. The most opulent hotel casino in the cosmos — haunt of the rich, the famous, and the unutterably corrupt. We must be in the service corridors.

**ACE:**
Must be a pretty big hotel.

**DOCTOR:**
So big its accounts department is hidden inside a black hole. The hotel smothers the planet Soror's surface like a gem-encrusted sarcophagus…

**ACE:**
Planet Bling.

**DOCTOR:**
Shame. It was such a pretty world once.

**ACE:**
You've been here before?

**DOCTOR:**
Long ago, during its pre-history. It reminded me of Earth, back in the early days of human evolution — only here, it was a simian species that became the dominant biped. When the Earth Empire finally reached Betelgeuse, the two races were destined for conflict.

**ACE:**
So what happened? The humans won?

**DOCTOR:**
… and built a hotel and leisure complex.

FX: AN ALARM STARTS BLARING

**ACE:**
Fire alarm?

**DOCTOR:**
Probably a drill. Some chap in a bright yellow visijacket will be escorting us to an assembly point in no time.

**ACE:**
Can't we go back to the TARDIS and try again?

**DOCTOR:**
I thought you wanted to find a way out of these corridors?

**ACE:**
Not if it means standing in a rainy car park for half an hour.

**DOCTOR:**
(THOUGHTFUL) Then again, there's no smoke without pyromaniacs.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 4: INT. ROOM SERVICE CONTROL**

ATMOS: STILL. CALM. SOFT BLEEPS OF COMPUTER SYSTEMS BURBLE AWAY. HOWEVER…

FX: THE SAME ALARM CONTINUES TO BLARE AWAY, SLIGHTLY DISTANT.

FX: OFF — MUTED SOUND OF MULTIPLE FISTS THUMPING A METAL DOOR.

**HOSTAGES:**
(OFF — MUFFLED, ANGRY, DESPERATE) You can't do this!/Let us out!/Open this door!

**KORDEL:**
Quiet in there. The next one of you that makes a noise will end as dead as the housekeeper. Understand?

FX: THUMPING STOPS.

**KORDEL:**
Yeah, heroics were way above her pay scale, too.

FX: PHONE RINGS.

**KORDEL:**
What now?

FX: BLEEP. KORDEL ANSWERS THE CALL.

**KORDEL:**
(CLEARS THROAT, ALL CHARM) Good afternoon, room service?

FX: RECEIVER — INCOMPREHENSIBLE BABBLE.

**KORDEL:**
Oh, Reception, thanks for calling…

FX: RECEIVER BABBLE.

**KORDEL:**
The security alarm? A malfunction, nothing serious.

FX: RECEIVER BABBLE.

**KORDEL:**
No, a patrol won't be necessary. Just a minor fluid spillage on the control terminal. I have a technician working on it.

FX: RECEIVER BABBLE.

**KORDEL:**
No, we wouldn't want the guests complaining. We'll have the issue resolved shortly.

FX: BUZZ ENDS CALL.

**KORDEL:**
(IMPATIENT) Get a move on, Ruben.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 5: INT. SERVICE CORRIDOR**

FX: ALARM CONTINUES. RUBEN USES AN ELECTRONIC PROBE ON AN ALARM PANEL. OCCASIONAL SPARKS FIZZ.

**RUBEN:**
(CLOSE. MUTTERING IMPATIENTLY) Stupid system. Why won't you shut down?

**ACE:**
(DISTANT — SHOUTS) Oi, mate!

FX: A FIZZ OF SPARKS. RUBEN DROPS THE PROBE

**RUBEN:**
OUCH!

**DOCTOR:**
(APPROACHING) Excuse my young friend's manners. New chambermaid, just started today — I'm giving her "the tour". (CONSPIRATORIALLY) Between you and me, I'm not sure she's got what it takes.

**ACE:**
Hey!

**DOCTOR:**
Do you need some assistance?

**RUBEN:**
(NERVOUS) No, no, it's all… everything's good. (We…)

**DOCTOR:**
Let me take a look. It's really not the most pleasant of noises, a security alarm.

**ACE:**
That's the point, isn't it? To be "alarming".

**DOCTOR:**
Maybe I've set off too many in my time. They've lost their novelty value. What do you think, Ace — the red or the blue wire?

**ACE:**
Oh, the red. It's always the red, isn't it?

**DOCTOR:**
Or it could be this grey one. Let's go grey. Happens to us all eventually. Or previously.

FX: WIRE CUTTERS SNAP, ALARM STOPS.

**DOCTOR:**
There.

CORRIDOR ATMOS. AN UNEASY MOMENT.

**DOCTOR:**
I don’t suppose you’d be kind enough to show us to the nearest exit, would you?

**RUBEN:**
But weren’t you…? — I mean, yes, you’d probably better follow me.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 6: INT. COURT OF JUSTICE**

FX: THE BELL RINGS ONCE.

**CHAFAL:**
And you claim this was your first encounter with Suspect A303, the Soror native Ruben?

**ACE:**
Why should I go to the effort of making stuff up? I thought that was your job?

**CHAFAL:**
Only, your companion seemed to know so much about the hotel's security system.

**ACE:**
The Doctor knew a lot of things.

**CHAFAL:**
One wonders how much you ever really knew about him?

FX: THE BELL CHIMES.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 7: INT. SERVICE CORRIDOR**

FX: FOOTSTEPS.

**RUBEN:**
(AHEAD OF THE OTHERS) It's not far. I just have to report back to my, um, line manager.

THE DOCTOR AND ACE TALK CONSPIRATORIALLY.

**ACE:**
Is it just me, or does Mister Short and Hairy seem a bit shifty?

**DOCTOR:**
Never judge a book by its cover, Ace — unless that book's called "Tampering with Security Systems for Dummies".

**ACE:**
So that's how you know so much about them!

**DOCTOR:**
This chap's a low-level porter, going by the uniform. I don't imagine he has clearance to operate a paper cup dispenser, let alone fix an alarm.

**RUBEN:**
(NEARBY, STAMMERS) Here we are. Just through here.

**ACE:**
(WHISPERS) Whatever it is he's up to, I think we're about to find out.

FX: DOOR HUMS OPEN, INTO:

**SCENE 8: INT. ROOM SERVICE CONTROL [CONTINUOUS]**

**KORDEL:**
Finally. What took you?

**RUBEN:**
(ENTERS) I'm sorry, Kordel. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't —

THE DOCTOR AND ACE ENTER.

**DOCTOR:**
Room Service, I presume? I wanted to talk to someone about the towels…

**ACE:**
(ALARMED) Professor.

FX: PULZ-KANNON COCKED AND PRIMED.

**DOCTOR:**
Ah. A Pulz-Kannon, I believe? Kannon with a 'K'.

**KORDEL:**
(SHOUTS) Hold it. Hands behind your heads. On your knees. NOW. (TO RUBEN) What were you playing at, Ruben?

**RUBEN:**
They found me at the alarm interface. I couldn't just let them walk away. What if they're Security?

**KORDEL:**
Do they look like Security? Go find a rope or something and get them tied up. (BEAT) Well, go on!

**RUBEN:**
Right. Yes…

FX: RUBEN HURRIES OFF

**ACE:**
(WHISPERS) Suddenly dirty linen doesn't seem so bad. Who'd stick up a hotel laundry?

**DOCTOR:**
(WHISPERS) Someone who wants to make a clean getaway?

**KORDEL:**
(ORDERS) Stop talking.

**DOCTOR:**
I think there's been something of a misunderstanding.

**KORDEL:**
I said stop.

**DOCTOR:**
You do realise it was us who shut down the alarm, don't you?

**KORDEL:**
You?

**DOCTOR:**
I'm afraid your friend seemed rather out of his depth.

**ACE:**
This place would be swarming with hotel security by now, if we hadn't helped him.

**KORDEL:**
I've already dealt with our security issue. We're in the clear. Question is — who are you?

**DOCTOR:**
Do I have to spell it out? We're part of the gang, not casual passers-by. You're evidently the muscle, he's the inside man, and we're… I.T. support.

**KORDEL:**
You look pretty casual to me. I wasn't told anyone else was on this job.

**DOCTOR:**
You're on a Need-to-Know basis, and you didn't need to know until you needed to know, which was when the alarm bells started ringing.

**ACE:**
Think of us as Plan B.

**DOCTOR:**
Precisely. — So you might want to point that Kannon with a K at something less susceptible to death by plasma fire…?

FX: RUBEN JOGS BACK.

**RUBEN:**
(PANTING) All I could find was this old shower curtain and some soap on a rope.

FX: PULZ-KANON POWERS DOWN.

**KORDEL:**
Keep them. Seems we're all in this together.

**SCENE 9: INT. COURT OF JUSTICE**

FX: BELL RINGS.

**CHAFAL:**
So, you admit that you and your accomplice were involved after all?

**ACE:**
We were bluffing. She had a gun on us. It was a strategy — confuse the enemy, get them on-side?

**CHAFAL:**
A simpler explanation would be that you were not only involved but complicit.

**ACE:**
Kordel was obviously dangerous, so we improvised! We had no idea what was going on in there.

**CHAFAL:**
Are you quite sure about that?

**ACE:**
I told you what happened!

**CHAFAL:**
And were you aware that the Doctor had been known to the Soror authorities for some time?

**ACE:**
He got around.

**CHAFAL:**
As the police records show.

FX: HOLOGRAPHIC EMMITER SWITCHES ON. IT HUMS IN THE BACKGROUND AS THE CLIPS PLAY OUT.

FX: CRACKLY ARCHIVE RECORDING — A CHANTING MOB THEN RAPID LASER-FIRE, SCREAMS.

**CHAFAL:**
Here. The social unrest on Soror B that resulted in the unavoidable execution of twenty-two civilians. There's your Doctor, ringleader of a criminal mob.

FX: HOLOGRAPHIC EMMITER RUNS ANOTHER CLIP.

FX: CRACKLY ARCHIVE RECORDING — RUNNING FEET, THEN AN EXPLOSION.

**CHAFAL:**
Here. The destruction of Soror's primary nutrient factory. The Doctor can be seen fleeing the facility shortly before the explosion.

FX: CRACKLY ARCHIVE RECORDING — RUNNING FEET, AND AN EVEN BIGGER EXPLOSION.

**CHAFAL:**
And again…

FX: CRACKLY ARCHIVE RECORDING — RUNNING FEET, AND BIGGER EXPLOSION STILL.

**CHAFAL:**
And again. These are not the actions of a man who merely blunders into situations. I put it to you that you knew exactly what you were getting into, and that you and the Doctor were on a mission. A mission to overthrow the Soror Dictat!

**ACE:**
That's ridiculous!

FX: THE BELL CHIMES.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 10: INT. ROOM SERVICE CONTROL**

**DOCTOR:**
Now we're all friends, how about some introductions? Criminal aliases, obviously. I'm the Doctor, AKA the Professor, AKA The Approaching Inclement Weather System — although I admit that last one is a work in progress.

**ACE:**
Yeah, and I'm Ace, his… Hench-Person?

**DOCTOR:**
I'm sure our reputations precede us.

**KORDEL:**
They don't. Just because you cut the alarm doesn't mean security won't be on our case eventually. We need to hustle. So, I.T. Helpdesk — what's your plan B?

**DOCTOR:**
I was rather hoping you'd tell us.

**ACE:**
That's the problem with Need-to-Know. We don't.

**KORDEL:**
Some support!

**DOCTOR:**
This location must have been chosen for a reason. Out of the way, unimportant, a soft target. But why?

**RUBEN:**
Room Service has a portal to the hotel's Vault Conduit. With the correct pass-code, it enables unrestricted access to every portal on the network, even the secure ones. I… used to work here, that's how I know. But…

**DOCTOR:**
A Vault Conduit. A conduit… A device for conveying matter from A to… Oh!

**ACE:**
What?

**DOCTOR:**
Some of the wealthiest and shadiest guests in the entire galaxy frequent the Grand Betelgeuse Hotel, every one of them with "baggage" they'd prefer to keep locked away, somewhere totally secure.

**ACE:**
The vault at the other end of the Vault Conduit…

**DOCTOR:**
Exactly. The safest safety deposit box in this or any other universe — which happens to be just beyond the event horizon of the hotel's tame black hole.

**ACE:**
Awesome. Beats stuffing bank notes under a mattress.

**DOCTOR:**
Yes… unless some nefarious ne'er-do-wells — no offence — get their hands on the pass-code, then you might as well have stayed in bed.

**KORDEL:**
Stop telling me what I already know and open the conduit. That's what you're being paid for, right?

**DOCTOR:**
You're our man in Havana, Ruben. The code is your area of expertise.

**RUBEN:**
… What?

**DOCTOR:**
The pass-code?

**RUBEN:**
Oh. Erm…

**KORDEL:**
You do have the code, don't you?

**RUBEN:**
I stole it when I was let go… but it doesn't work. I found out just when the housekeeper…

**KORDEL:**
(ANGRY) I knew you'd turn out to be a useless asset, you Sororian waste of molecules.

**RUBEN:**
(UPSET) It's not my fault. They must have changed it. And you'd better stop talking to me like that, or you'll be sorry!

**KORDEL:**
Not nearly as sorry as you're about to be.

FX: PULZ-KANNON COCKED

**RUBEN:**
(SQUEALS) But…

**DOCTOR:**
(COMMANDING) NO. No more killing. If you pull that trigger, I'm not opening anything.

(BEAT)

**KORDEL:**
(DISGUSTED) Ugh.

FX: WEAPON POWERS DOWN.

**DOCTOR:**
There. Doesn't that feel better?

**KORDEL:**
Not particularly.

**DOCTOR:**
I'll have to work around the missing code, but it shouldn't take long to knock up a bypass circuit. Ace, take Ruben and find the staff room. We could all do with a stiff drink. Tea, milk and half-a-dozen sugars please.

**ACE:**
I'm not *really* a trainee chambermaid, you know.

**DOCTOR:**
(GROWLS UNDER HIS BREATH) I know. Just get Ruben away from her — and try to find out what it is we're supposed to be stealing.

CROSSFADE TO:

**SCENE 11: INT. STAFF ROOM**

ATMOS: A SMALL ROOM.

FX: FADE UP. BUTTONS PRESSED. DRINKS BEING POURED FROM A DISPENSER.

**RUBEN:**
(PERTURBED, NOT REALLY SPEAKING TO ACE) She can't speak to me like that. How was I supposed to know the code had changed …?

**ACE:**
Here. Drink this… whatever this is.

**RUBEN:**
It's all going wrong. I don't know what to do.

**ACE:**
The Doctor will make it right. He's broken into way more places than I have, and I grew up in Perivale.

**RUBEN:**
(SIPS DRINK AND SNORTS CONTEMPTUOUSLY) You humans are all the same. Duplicitous, greedy, criminal monsters.

**ACE:**
We're not all the same. If it's monsters you want, think yourself lucky we're not Cybermen, or worse.

RUBEN DOESN'T RESPOND. ACE TRIES AGAIN.

**ACE:**
You must have been pretty desperate, Ruben. To come back like this, after they'd… they fired you, right?

**RUBEN:**
It happens. Sororian labour is cheap and easy to come by. Career prospects are not something we give much consideration too. So long as we can feed our families.

**ACE:**
If this place is worth as much as the Doctor says, they'll feed pretty well.

**RUBEN:**
It is worth nothing.

**ACE:**
So if it's not about the money, what are you after? Revenge?

**RUBEN:**
That's what you think this is about? Something that petty? You think we're so small-minded?

**ACE:**
No. It's just, you don't seem like much of a criminal.

**RUBEN:**
I'm nothing like that witch out there. Or you and your bizarre companion. Thugs, thieves and vagrants.

**ACE:**
The Doctor saved your life, remember?

**RUBEN:**
What good is being alive if I've already failed my people? My family?

FX: CHAIR SCRAPES ACROSS THE FLOOR, ANGRY FOOTSTEPS.
RUBEN STANDS AND WALKS OUT.

**ACE:**
Ruben, wait! (BEAT, TO HERSELF) Sorry, Professor. I tried.

ACE FOLLOWS RUBEN.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 12: INT. ROOM SERVICE CONTROL**

FX: DOOR OPENS. KORDEL ENTERS.

**KORDEL:**
I've sealed the entrances. Security will be onto us the second the conduit is activated. Should keep them off our backs until we're gone. Are you done yet, Doctor?

**DOCTOR:**
(WORKING AWAY ON A CIRCUIT) Almost there…

**KORDEL:**
We're running out of time. Just need to add a little extra insurance policy…

FX: KORDEL ATTACHES A SMALL DEVICE TO THE SIDE OF THE PORTAL CONSOLE, BLEEPS SIGNIFY IT HAS BEEN ACTIVATED.

**DOCTOR:**
A thermic detonator?

**KORDEL:**
It'll trigger automatically once we're on the other side. I don't want anyone following us.

**DOCTOR:**
Doesn't blowing up the portal make this rather a one-way trip?

**KORDEL:**
I never take on a job without an extraction plan.

**DOCTOR:**
I prefer to make things up as I go along.

**KORDEL:**
Why doesn't that surprise me?

**DOCTOR:**
Can I ask — why Ruben? What did you promise him? I can't help feeling he was hoping to get rather more out of this than money.

**KORDEL:**
We needed an ex-employee who could gain us easy access to the conduit. He was so keen, it was as if the servile mongrel couldn't wait to find a way back into the hotel.

**DOCTOR:**
Fascinating…

**KORDEL:**
Still, without the code, he's excess baggage. We'll be leaving him here.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 13: INT. STAFF ROOM CORRIDOR**

**RUBEN:**
(SOBBING)

FX: ACE APPROACHING — SLOWS WHEN SHE SEES HIM.

**ACE:**
Ruben?

**RUBEN:**
(COMPOSES HIMSELF) Keep away from me.

**ACE:**
I'm trying to understand. What is it you have to do? The Doctor and me, maybe we can help.

**RUBEN:**
(INTERUPTS) I don't need your help, or anyone else's. This is something I have to do.

**ACE:**
Look - we're not really part of any gang. Whatever Kordel is here to steal, believe me, we have nothing to do with it.

**RUBEN:**
I stopped believing human lies the day they took my children.

(BEAT)

**ACE:**
Your kids? I'm so sorry. Who would do that? Why?

**RUBEN:**
(CYNICAL) The "Grand" Betelgeuse Hotel has a high staff turnover. They take what they need. If the guests only knew the suffering and torment my people endure so that they have a "pleasant stay".

**ACE:**
Can't you go to the authorities? Tell them what's happening?

**RUBEN:**
The hotel is "the authorities". The Soror Dictat controls everything — the solar farms, the furnaces, even the dessert menu — all in the service of hospitality.

**ACE:**
So if the hotel is just another branch of the state, then… That's why you're working with Kordel — You want to use the conduit to find your kids!

**RUBEN:**
(DARKLY) Something like that.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 14: INT. ROOM SERVICE CONTROL**

FX: SWITCH CLICKS, COMPUTER CODE FLOWS ACROSS A SCREEN.

**DOCTOR:**
Who needs a secret access code when there's a Doctor in the house?

**KORDEL:**
Are we good to go?

**DOCTOR:**
More or less, once Ace and Ruben get back.

FX: DOOR OPENS. ACE ENTERS.

**DOCTOR:**
Talk of the devil… No tea?

**ACE:**
Just a kind of gloopy soup. Not really your sort of thing.

**DOCTOR:**
Shame. A cup of tea helps no end before a spot of inter-dimensional matter transferal. Where's Ruben?

**ACE:**
He's… he'll be here in a bit. He just needs a little time.

**DOCTOR:**
There isn't any. We're ready.

**KORDEL:**
Not so fast.

FX: PULZ-KANNON COCKED

**KORDEL:**
Get over there. You're not coming.

FX: DOOR OPENS. RUBEN ENTERS [STEREO POSITIONING SUGGESTS HE'S ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF KORDEL TO ACE AND THE DOCTOR].

**RUBEN:**
What's going on?

**KORDEL:**
I'm putting this plan back on track. Anyone but me going through the portal was never part of it.

**RUBEN:**
(DISTRAUGHT, SHOUTS) You lied to me!

**KORDEL:**
That's rich, coming from you!

**RUBEN:**
NO! (SCREAMS — LIKE AN ANGRY CHIMPANZEE)

RUBEN LEAPS AT KORDEL, AND THEY STRUGGLE.

FX: A FIGHT. FURNITURE SENT FLYING AS THE TWO CRASH ABOUT.

**DOCTOR:**
Ruben! No!

KORDEL STRUGGLES FOR BREATH AS RUBEN ATTEMPTS TO THROTTLE HER.

**KORDEL:**
Achhkkkkk…! Get… this… animal… off me!

**ACE:**
Watch out, Professor. The gun!

FX: TWO RAPID BLASTS ECHO AROUND THE ROOM. SILENCE. THEN A LARGE OBJECT — KORDEL'S CORPSE — SLAMS INTO THE GROUND.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 15: INT. COURT OF JUSTICE**

FX: THE BELL CHIMES

**CHAFAL:**
When our security team gained access to Room Service Control, you were found with two corpses, burnt beyond all recognition.

**ACE:**
The Doctor. He didn't stand a chance…

**CHAFAL:**
(CHUCKLES) Convincing, but impossible. One was the housekeeper. The autopsy confirmed that the other was female. Are you implying your accomplice somehow changed gender, mid-robbery?

**ACE:**
OK, Judge Judy — it was Kordel. Ruben got hold of her blaster in the struggle and… well, blasted her.

**CHAFAL:**
You expect me to believe an ex-hotel porter, a Sororian, knew how to fire an advanced energy weapon?

**ACE:**
It's not difficult. All you have to do is pull the trigger. Give me a gun and I'll prove it, if you like?

**CHAFAL:**
That won't be necessary. It is well known that Sororians are incapable of anything more than rudimentary menial tasks.

**ACE:**
You're wrong. You treat them like animals, yet you're surprised when they fight back?

**CHAFAL:**
The facts are not up for debate. You and the Doctor conspired to murder your accomplices, to take their share of your ill-gotten gains.

**ACE:**
You're an idiot.

**CHAFAL:**
We have a murder weapon, two victims, one suspect, and the testimony of several hostages.

**ACE:**
Who were locked up in a storage cabinet. They didn't see anything! Don't you even want to know what happened to the others?

**CHAFAL:**
Is your guilt not proven? Or do their deaths weigh heavily on your conscience too?

FX: THE BELL CHIMES.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 16: INT. ROOM SERVICE CONTROL**

**ACE:**
Kordel's dead.

**RUBEN:**
(CATCHING BREATH) You, Doctor. You were working on a way to open the Vault Conduit, bypassing the security protocols?

**DOCTOR:**
I was.

**RUBEN:**
Do it now, (FX: PULZ-KANNON COCKED) or your hench-person dies too.

**ACE:**
There's no need for this, Ruben. Once the Doctor knows what they did to your family…

**RUBEN:**
Do it!

FX: BLEEPS, SWITCHES FLICKED, THE VAULT CONDUIT ACTIVATES.

**DOCTOR:**
Conduit active. Everybody, into the portal.

**RUBEN:**
No. Now, Doctor — activate every other portal in the network, on both sides of the black hole.

**DOCTOR:**
Both sides? But —

**RUBEN:**
Never mind. I've been watching, I can do it myself.

RUBEN STARTS ALTERING SETTINGS ON THE PORTAL CONTROL TERMINAL.

**DOCTOR:**
Ruben, think about this!

FX: THE CONDUIT SOUND SHIFTS PITCH. THE SOUND INCREASES IN PITCH AND VOLUME THROUGHOUT THE SCENE.

**ACE:**
(TO DOCTOR) What's he doing, Doctor? What happens if he activates every portal in the network? Something bad, right?

**DOCTOR:**
Extremely.

VOICES RAISED ABOVE THE GROWING DIN.

**DOCTOR:**
Ruben, you're about to flood a planet-wide transmat system with unfiltered anti-matter. Do you have any idea what that means?

**RUBEN:**
Freedom!

**DOCTOR:**
The total destruction of your planet. Your people. Every one of them will die.

**RUBEN:**
Your Earth Empire began that process long ago.

**ACE:**
But your kids…!

**RUBEN:**
(DISTRAUGHT) The Dictat stole them from me. If they're not dead already, there's no chance I'll ever find them. Now I'm taking everything back, for Soror!

**ACE:**
This isn't the way!

FX: CONDUIT — LOUDER, HIGHER PITCHED.

**DOCTOR:**
What if your children are still alive? The hotel will have kept records, left a paper trail. I can help you follow it.

**ACE:**
We can help you find them, Ruben. Please! You owe it to them to try!

(BEAT)

**RUBEN:**
(REALISATION) I… oh my… what have I done?

FX: RUBEN TAPS FURIOUSLY AT THE CONTROLS, BUT THE OVERLOAD STILL INCREASES.

**RUBEN:**
(SOBBING) I can't stop it. I can't stop it!

**DOCTOR:**
(SHOUTING) It's too late. Ace, take cover!

**ACE:**
(SHOUTING) What are you doing?

**DOCTOR:**
(SHOUTING) Just take cover! — Ruben, into the portal.

**RUBEN:**
(SHOVED) I've killed them all!

**ACE:**
No, wait! Where are you going…?

**DOCTOR:**
Take cove[rrrrrr!]

FX: CONDUIT TRANSMAT BEAM SHIMMERS.

FX: BOOM! THERMIC DETONATOR DETONATES… AND THEN SILENCE.

**SCENE 17:** **INT. COURT OF JUSTICE**

**ACE:**
The portal must have been damaged by the overload. As soon as they stepped onto it, it… exploded. There was nothing left of either of them.

**SCENE 18: INT. ROOM SERVICE CONTROL [A FEW MOMENTS LATER]**

FX: ROOM SERVICE ATMOS FADES IN, DREAMILY IN THE BACKGROUND, RESOLVING AS THE HOSTAGES START SHOUTING.

FX: HOSTAGES BANGING ON DOOR, VOICES MUFFLED.

**HOSTAGES:**
What's happening out there?/Help! Help us!/Let us out!

**ACE:**
Doctor…? Ruben? DOCTOR! — Oh, no. (BEAT; REALISATION) The hostages. Hang on. I'm coming.

FX: ACE OPENS THE DOOR, THE HOSTAGES BURST OUT.

**ACE:**
I'm sorry. I wasn't a part of this.

**HOSTAGES:**
Yeah, right!
She's one of them.
Hold her!
Grab her!

**ACE:**
I told you, I'm not… argh! Get off…!

HOSTAGES PILE ONTO ACE.

FADE OUT.

CUT TO:

**SCENE 19: INT. COURT OF JUSTICE**

**ACE:**
The hostages grabbed me, called Security, and, well, here I am. Just my luck.

**CHAFAL:**
Your "friend" the Doctor left you to answer for his crimes. Perhaps that was the reason he tolerated your companionship, all along.

**ACE:**
He died saving your planet. Doesn't that mean anything to you?

**CHAFAL:**
He was part of a pre-meditated attack against the Dictat. You admitted as much yourself.

**ACE:**
I've told you what happened. Have you got cloth ears or something?

**CHAFAL:**
You and your associates have been found guilty as charged. As their legal status is deceased, their sentences will be commuted onto yours. Edited highlights of this hearing will be made available for public consumption, usual viewing fees apply. Guards — take her to the Dispersal Chamber.

FX: ACE LED AWAY BY TWO GUARDS.

**ACE:**
I'll come back and haunt you. The Doctor's a hero. My hero!

FX: DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS CROSS TO:

**SCENE 20: INT. OUTSIDE/INSIDE DISPERSAL CHAMBER**

FX: FOOTSTEPS.

**ACE:**
(DRAGGED ALONG) So long as the people he inspired keep fighting, the Doctor will never die!

FX: TO HALT. DISPERSAL CHAMBER CAGE DOORS CLANG OPEN.

**GUARD:**
Get in, or be thrown in.

**ACE:**
Throw me in, see if I care!

**GUARD:**
Suit yourself. (ACE SHOVED IN)

**ACE:**
(GASPS)

FX: THE DISPERSAL CHAMBER DOORS CLOSE SLOWLY AS ACE SPEAKS, CLANGING SHUT AS SHE FINISHES.

**ACE:**
You hear me? The Doctor will never die! Never!

FX: DISPERSAL FIELD STARTS UP — AN APPALLING, BASS WAIL.

**ACE:**
What, already —? (SCREAMS)

BUT AS WE RECOIL AT ACE'S SCREAM OF TERROR…

FX: THE CONDUIT TRANSMAT BEAM MIXES IN AND TAKES OVER.

CROSSFADE TO:

**SCENE 21: INT. SAFE**

FX: CONDUIT TRANS-MAT BEAM FADES OUT.

ATMOS: CALM, SAFE, STILL.

**ACE:**
What the…?

**DOCTOR:**
I'm sorry I took so long.

**ACE:**
Doctor!!! Is this… a safe?

**DOCTOR:**
A safe space in the portal network.

**ACE:**
You made it into the vault conduit after all! You beamed me out of the dispersal chamber!

**DOCTOR:**
A little theatrical, but so far as the court knows, your atoms have been utterly discombobulated.

**ACE:**
There was an explosion. Back in Room Service Control. I thought…

**DOCTOR:**
Kordel had installed a thermic detonator to explode when the portal was used, so using it was the quickest way to stop everything else going bang. That's why I told you to take cover.

**ACE:**
You could have told me!

**DOCTOR:**
Ah, but thanks to your testimony, mine and Ruben's legal status is 'deceased'.

**ACE:**
Great, so you used me.

**DOCTOR:**
It afforded me a wonderful opportunity. I was right about the hotel records. I found Ruben's family.

**ACE:**
What about Ruben? How is he?

**DOCTOR:**
Resting. I know a Venusian litany that works wonders to soothe a troubled mind. He was right, though: his people need our help.

**ACE:**
Too right. They showed me holograms, in the courtroom. You were helping the Sororian rebels.

**DOCTOR:**
Really? Well I wasn't, yet. That's the problem with time travel — sometimes the future overtakes you. This hotel needs new management.

**ACE:**
Well, it's the worst hotel I've ever stayed in. But I was being held in a maximum security cell awaiting summary trial and execution.

**DOCTOR:**
Then once we've finished here, let's go somewhere a little more easy-going. You're driving.

MUSIC: CLOSING THEME.